

THE SPARK GAP

THE OFFICAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MID-STATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

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BPL CONTROVERSEY CONTINUES

BPL – Broadband over Power Lines is in the testing stages now and few hams have heard it in our area. However there are tests being conducted now in the Raleigh, North Carolina area by Progressive Energy. Several hams in that area have reported interference on the 10 meter and 12 meter bands. Just like the same type of tests around the world there has been interference to communications. At this time the Power Company Progressive Power of North Carolina does not exactly know how to handle complaints from local hams. The hams are going through the FCC and the power company attorney to lodge complaints of interference to their stations.

BPL is a means to carry Internet Data over power lines to homes and businesses. Although this might be a practical and cost efficient method it has draw backs as we all know. The power lines are not shielded and radiate RF causing interference to any radio or devise near by. There are other means, that are currently being used that also use RF but do not cause harmful interference. PLC (Power Line Carrier) uses low frequencies in the neighborhood of 200 kHz . DSL and cable use RF too but are of a higher frequency but they also include shielding which is most important.

It looks like it will be sometime before the BPL be resolved and it will take all HAMS to make the powers that be take notice. With-in the last couple of weeks President Bush mentioned BPL by name and spoke of it as a technological advancement that could bring the Internet to everyone.

Now is the time to act on this matter and as a HAM we all should do our part and contact our US Congressmen, Senators and our President on how we feel about BPL. We should use careful wording and be considerate to them while expressing facts about the problems with BPL as we all well know.

Please pick up your latest QST, CQ magazines and read the articles or go to the ARRL Web Page <http://www.arrl.org> for more information about this matter. One thing for sure it is not going away for a while and our input is needed. If enough HAMS let their feelings and facts be known the out come will be more pleasant to live with. There is enough QRM and BPL does not have to added to it. Stay tuned there will be a lot more to come in the coming months.

JUST IN ... NEW FCC RULE CHANGES

The FCC says minor amendments to various Amateur Radio rules become effective June 1. The regulatory changes, which the FCC made on its own motion rather than in reaction to any petitions, appeared May 5 in the Federal Register.

"This document makes minor amendments to various rule sections to clarify or eliminate duplicative language or conform them with other rule sections," the FCC said.

Among other changes, the most significant involved revising the wording of Section 97.307(d), which defines spurious emissions. The updated language imposes a slightly higher standard on newer transmitters or amplifiers of any power level. Starting June 1, the rule will provide that:

- * the mean power of any spurious emission from HF transmitters or external RF power amplifiers installed after January 1, 2003, must be at least 43 dB below the mean power of the fundamental emission.

- * the mean power of any spurious emission from HF transmitters or external RF power amplifiers installed on or before January 1, 2003, must not exceed 50 mW and must be at least 40 dB below the mean power of the fundamental emission. If the mean power output of such as transmitter is less than 5 W, the attenuation must be at least 30 dB.

Still exempt from the provisions of Section 97.307(d) are transmitters built before April 15, 1977, or those first marketed before January 1, 1978.

The FCC also has redefined what constitutes an Amateur Radio operator to reflect the advent of the Universal Licensing System (ULS) electronic licensee database. Under the revised Section 97.3(a)(1) an amateur operator is "a person named in an amateur operator/primary license station grant on the ULS consolidated licensee database to be the control operator of an amateur station." The current rule defines an amateur operator as "a person holding a written authorization to be the control operator of an amateur station."

Another change eliminates Technician or Technician with Element 1 credit licensees from the classes of operators permitted to prepare Element 1 (5 WPM Morse) and Element 2 (Technician written) examinations.

The Commission ordered the rule changes within the context of a larger, wide-ranging Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) in WT

Docket 04-140. That NPRM addresses several Amateur Radio-related petitions and proposes revisions to operating privileges. The FCC continues to seek comments on these proposals. Comments are due by

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FCC rule changes cont....

Tuesday, June 15, and reply comments by Wednesday, June 30. Among other changes, the FCC has recommended adopting the ARRL's "Novice reforming" plan.

Thanks to the ARRL for this information.

MARC YOUR CALENDAR

- **JUNE 12** **Strawberry Festival White River Township Fire Dept.**
 - **Ham Radio Demo**

 - **JUNE 26** **Greenwood Fire Department Health and Safety Fair**
 - **Ham radio demo**

 - **JUNE 26 & 27** **FIELD DAY 2004 Camp Atterbury**

 - **AUGUST 7** **Flat Rock Run 7K marathon**
 - **SEPT. 25** **Greenwood Marching Band Invitational**
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FIELD DAY WILL SOON BE HERE ***YOUR HELP IS NEEDED !!!***

Plans for the multi-county 2004 Field Day are beginning to solidify. MARC F. D. chairman JR Osborne-KB9HSE has reserved the south meeting room at the Johnson county Park office in Camp Atterbury. This is the same location, minus the kitchen facilities, we have used over the past several years.

Plans for food and special ceremonies are being worked out. JR still needs volunteers to help coordinate the weekend events. Contact him at 565-3922 or at Doublegoofballs@wmconnect.com.

Check out page 5 in the May 2004 QST, Neil Rapp WB9VPG is in pictured accepting an award from ARRL. There is a brief write up about the program is runs at Bloomington South High School. Neil was our guest speaker at the April MARC meeting.

Sorry for a short issue this month, too much going on.

.... N9SIU

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Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets at 0800 EST the third Saturday of each month at the Johnson County Law Enforcement Center in the Emergency Operations Center. All hams are encouraged to attend this meeting and VE testing is held January through November after the meeting has ended.

MARC operates the 146.835 MHz (151.4 PL) repeater and all hams are welcome to use it.

For more information please visit our club web page at: <http://www.midstatehams.org>

